

JONATHAN SHAFER.

JUNE 12, 1842.

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. HALL, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, submitted the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to which was referred the petition of Jonathan Shafer, submit the following report:

The petitioner states that he is son-in-law of Christian Orendorff, who was a captain in the revolutionary war, from the State of Maryland, and that on the settlement of his accounts with John Pierce, commissioner of army accounts, he received from said Pierce a final settlement certificate for the sum of \$28 $\frac{30}{100}$ on interest, from 16th March, 1782, which has long since been lost, and has never been paid; and he prays Congress to pass a law authorizing the said certificate and interest to be paid to him.

There is no proof introduced to show that the petitioner is either the heir or representative of Orendorff, or that the certificate has been lost; but it is certified by the Register of the Treasury that such a certificate was issued January 1, 1783, and that it appears to be outstanding and unpaid.

The committee think the evidence altogether insufficient to establish a claim, either in behalf of the petitioner or the legal representative of Captain Orendorff. Final settlement certificates, which were issued after the close of the war by Mr. Pierce, were payable to *bearer*, and passed from hand to hand by delivery. They constituted, for several years, a portion of the depreciated circulating medium of the country. If the certificate now claimed has been lost, the probability is much stronger that it was lost by others, after being put in circulation, than that it was lost by Captain Orendorff. Of one hundred and thirty-three war office certificates presented at the Treasury for payment, under the act of 1818, only one was presented by the original holder. It is probable that final settlement certificates circulated still more freely than loan office certificates; but, upon the doctrine of chances, as shown by the foregoing fact, it would seem that there may be one chance in one hundred and thirty-three that this certificate was not put in circulation by the original holder. This chance would certainly be quite too small to justify the payment of the certificate to the petitioner: besides, it may still be in existence, in the hands of a *bona fide* holder; or, if retained by Captain Orendorff, may still be found, and presented for payment by a third per-

son. Instances are continually occurring in which such certificates are brought to light and presented for payment. For a more full account of these and other Government certificates, and the grounds on which such claims as this are deemed invalid, see Report No. 177, 2d session 26th Congress, in the case of Thomas Rutledge; from which it would also seem that the Treasury books cannot be relied upon as conclusively showing that the certificates which appear from them as outstanding are really unpaid.

The committee append a form of Mr. Pierce's final settlement certificates and recommend that the claim be rejected.

[Form of a final settlement certificate.]

No. 66,073.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, *May 1, 1784.*

On the final settlement of an account between the United States and John Windsor, there appeared to be due to him the sum of \$40 $\frac{9}{10}$. I do therefore certify that the said sum is payable, with interest, at six per cent., from the 4th day of November, 1783, to the said John Windsor or bearer.

\$40 $\frac{9}{10}$.

JNO. PIERCE, *Commissioner.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Register's Office, March 23, 1842.

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an original certificate issued by John Pierce, commissioner, on file of record in this office, and which has been cancelled.

T. L. SMITH, *Register.*